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The Non-Subscribing Presbyterian

No. 366. MARCH, 1937.

SABELLIAN. ARIAN. SOCINIAN.

"Included in the term 'Unitarian'."—GORDON.

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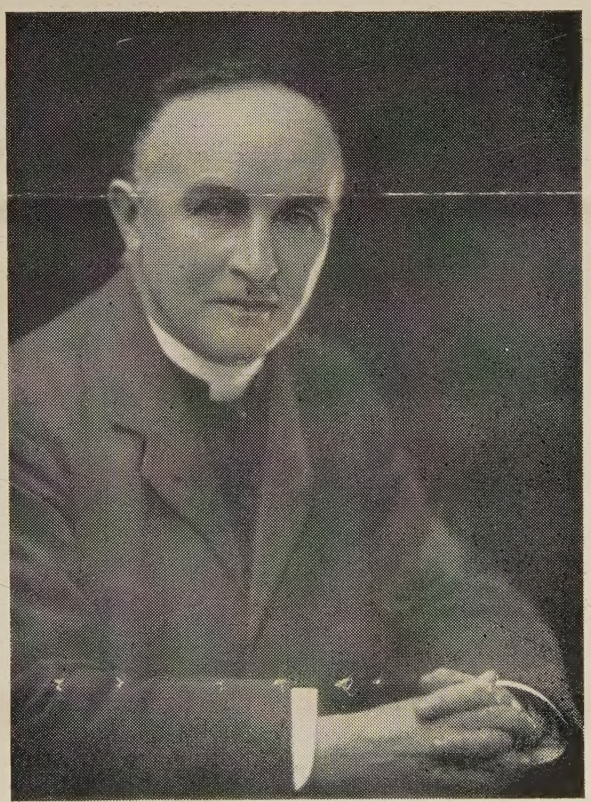

By courtesy of "The Inquirer.

THE REV. PRINCIPAL MCLACHLAN, D.D.,
PRESIDENT OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY. LONDON.

NOTES AND NEWS.

The name of Dr. M'Lachlan, whose portrait appears on our front page this month, is well known to our readers. We are indebted to "The Inquirer and Christian Life" for the loan of the block. Principal M'Lachlan's books, published by the Manchester University Press, are of great value in the study of the Unitarian and Free Christian Movement, and "The Life of Alexander Gordon" is, no doubt, well-known to our readers. Because of College engagements at the time of our Synod meetings, we have never had Dr. M'Lachlan with us on the occasion, but almost every year his name is mentioned for the Lectureship. He is the popular President of the General Assembly, 1936-37.

Dr. M'Lachlan was born on the 22nd August, 1876. He entered the (then) Unitarian Home Missionary College as a student in 1899, studying there and at Owens College (now the Victoria University of Manchester). After a distinguished academic career, he entered upon two short ministerial appointments at Leeds and Bradford. In 1911 he returned to the College to take up the office of Tutor and Warden, a position he held for the next ten years. In 1921 he was appointed Principal.

At the Victoria University of Manchester Dr. M'Lachlan has been Lecturer in Hellenistic Greek since 1915. He has filled the offices of Dean of the Faculty of Theology, and of Chairman of Convocation.

In denominational affairs Dr. M'Lachlan has been a most earnest and zealous worker, giving liberally of time, thought, and strength to the service of our Churches. He has a wide and intimate knowledge of their history and of their present position. Dr. M'Lachlan has rendered distinguished service both to the College and to the Ministry. He has done much to uphold the Unitarian tradition of fine scholarship and exact study; has ever been zealous to ensure a high standard of training for ministerial students; and has laboured to maintain the dignity, responsibility, and privileges of the ministerial calling. In 1936 he was accorded the highest honours which it is in the power of our denomination to afford, when, in the same year, he filled the offices both of Essex Hall Lecturer and of President of the General Assembly.

The College Chapel is being reconstructed as a memorial of permanent character to mark the 25th anniversary of Principal M'Lachlan's service.

* * *

We thank our many correspondents for their words of cheer and encouragement. We are glad to know that they appreciate the Magazine.

* * *

With reference to the "Code of Discipline," so far as our recollection of its adoption is concerned, two fundamental principles were kept in mind, together with the foundation in Presbyterianism, viz., that congregations were autonomous, and that their connection with other congregations in the Presbytery was purely voluntary. Congregations which had been outside of Presbytery were specially considered, and also in case of a resolution passed at a special congregational meeting of one of the congregations, which had been fully attended, a concession was made in altering the wording in the draft which was before the Synod. There were present eminent lawyers, and the effort was made to avoid rigidity; hence, what may have been considered a vagueness on certain points. The Code was a compromise.

* * *

Aldhouse, Rev. T. H., M.A. (T.C.D.), Rector, Clonmethan, Oldtown, Co. Dublin. Has worked long for revival of Irish culture. Member several learned Societies. Writer of beautiful Irish tales.

* * *

Bibby, Joseph: Founder of J. Bibby and Sons, Ltd., manufacturers, Liverpool; J.P. City of Liverpool; b. 12-1-51. Editor Bibby's Annual. Has written on economic subjects: "Towards the Light," etc. Applied his own theories of right relationships between employer and employed into a well-thought-out plan of benefits for his own employees.

* * *

We understand that it is a rule of Freemasonry that a Masonic service shall not be held in a Unitarian Church.

A Masonic service was held over a year ago in a Meeting-House of the Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church, but beforehand the organisers were convinced that the Meeting-House was truly and rightly Presbyterian. Individual members may be as Unitarian as ever they choose to be; but, as has been proven in one or two instances, it has been disastrous to attach the name to the building. In England one congregation lost a large endowment through the name "Unitarian" having been placed on the notice-board, where it wasn't before.

* * *

The bond of union between the Synod of Munster and the Northern Presbyteries was strengthened by the very happy occasion of the General Synod in Dublin last year. It is to be hoped that some of the pleasant acquaintances then formed will be renewed this summer, and that we will have the pleasure of welcoming the friends from the South, and of giving the Synod of Munster its rightful place among the other Presbyteries.

* * *

It would seem as though the travels of our Moderator have proved profitable to our Denomination. Dromore, Crumlin, Newry, and our School at Moneyrea have all benefited by his account of his trip to Russia, as well as good causes outside. Dr. Agnew's willingness to help anywhere he can must impose a considerable strain on one who has been warned that any undue exertion might be dangerous to him. We had the privilege a few nights ago of attending York Street once more. The packed Church and the hearty singing and the veritable hive of young people who crowded the after-meeting, where we saw a number of members of our country Churches being entertained to tea with many other visitors, was an inspiration. Sunday in York Street, with two services, Sunday School, Fellowship and after-meeting, as well as several meetings of Committee of Church and other organisations, must be a busy day for the officials, but they have always time for a word to a visitor. "What might not be done here if there were space and finances to support it?" "Give us the room, and we will see about finances" was the answer we received to that remarks. J.B.

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* * *

The Non-Subscribing Presbyterian can be obtained at the Depository, 35, Rosemary Street, Belfast.

SUBSIDY FUND.

Contributions should be addressed to the Manager, Rev. A. Davison, Dromore, by whom they will be gratefully acknowledged.

REPORT.

Dunmurry.—The Xmas and New Year Party for the Sunday School was most successful. The pupils have been gradually increasing during 1936, and the number is now 59. Quite a number of members of the congregation and choir gave their willing services, and all were greatly interested in the Xmas Tree, which was well laden with handsome presents, made attractive by electric lighting. Mrs. Hicks presented the prizes, and she was ably helped by many willing hands. To her and to them a rousing vote of thanks was passed, which brought to a close another happy and memorable evening in the Courthouse.

Glenarm.—Our Annual Sunday School Party and Prize Distribution took place on February 10th. The children sat down to well-filled tables and left them in a state of depletion. It is astonishing the amount of food that can disappear in twenty minutes when thirty children with healthy appetites set seriously to work! Tea was followed by an impromptu entertainment of songs, recitations and dances, contributed by the children themselves. Then followed the distribution of prizes. Two children—Annie Robinson and Ruby Cameron

—had made every possible attendance. To mark such a good record, Miss Galbraith gave a special prize to each. In moving a vote of thanks to Miss Galbraith, who distributed the prizes, the minister thanked her for the charming way she had discharged the duty, and especially for her generosity in providing the special prizes. The remainder of the evening was pleasantly passed in games. Altogether a very happy and successful evening.

Crumlin. — On Friday, February 12, the Rev. Dr. Agnew gave his lecture on '4,000 Miles Through Soviet Russia," by invitation of the First Presbyterian Church, at the Camlin Picture House, Crumlin. An audience of about 250 (population of Crumlin is given as 689) listened with rapt attention, as for two hours the lecturer unfolded the story of Russia's mighty effort and amazing achievement. At the close of the lecture Mr. Franklin Manderson and Mr. W. Hamilton voiced the thanks of the congregation to Dr. Agnew.

Domestic Mission. — Our Dramatic Society has made three public appearances since the New Year—two in Central Hall, Belfast, and one in Comber. On all three occasions the members taking part gave a very good performance and were enthusiastically received by those present. Mr. F. M. Pett, as author and producer, and his players are to be congratulated on their attainments since the formation of the Society. The Debating Society has been fortunate in securing a number of prominent speakers during the past weeks. The following summary will give some indication of the wide diversity of subject matter under discussion:—Councillor W. Wilton, "Poor Law and Public Assistance Administration," Mr. J. S. Rodgers, "Wild Animal and Bird Life in Ulster," Mr. Smith, "Is there Religious Freedom in Russia?" Councillor R. Hill," "Housing Conditions in Belfast," and Miss A. M'Meekin, B.A., LL.B., "Internationalism." All the addresses were followed with keen interest, and we are deeply indebted to the speakers for their assistance. We welcome to the membership of our teaching staff Mr. J. Radcliffe, who is a student in Queen's College preparing for the ministry of our church. We acknowledge with gratitude the following —Gifts of clothing from Mrs. Mayes, Miss Emerson, Mrs. Carr and Miss M'Kisack. W.E.

Belfast Domestic Mission Annual Sermons. — The special preacher this year will be the Rev. J. A. Weatherall, M.A., Principal of Manchester College, Oxford. Mr. Weatherall has Moira connections, where his father was minister for many years. Mr. Weatherall has had several charges in England, and prior to his appointment as Principal of Manchester College, Oxford, was London University Extension Lecturer in European Languages, when he had charge of Essex Church, The Mall. At the Presbyterian College, Carmarthen, he was Professor of Hebrew and Hellenistic Greek. Mr. Weatherall will preach in the morning at First Church, Rosemary Street, and in the evening at All Souls' Church, Elmwood Avenue, and address the annual meeting in the Central Hall, Rosemary Street, on March 14th and 15th respectively. Lord Justice Andrews will be in the chair at the annual meeting, and Dr. A. L. Agnew, B.A., Moderator of the Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church of Ireland; Rev. R. Nicol Cross, Rev. W. Howard Payne, and others will address the meeting.

E. M. JACKSON, Hon. Sec.

All Souls', Belfast. — "Simplicity in character, in manners, in style, in all things, the supreme excellence is simplicity."—Longfellow. Our organist and choirmaster, Mr. Kenny, would be pleased to hear of anyone who would like to join the choir. Of course, it must be understood that it is all voluntary. Last month saw the first of this season's Badminton matches, when we played Trinity Church, Dunmurry. The Women's League began to meet again last month for their year's long work, for the next Sale of Work. During the month a match has been arranged with the Malone Badminton Club, the "A" team to play on Monday, 8th, at Malone. Please note that the Minister has changed his address to C/o. the Misses Love, 3 Myrtlefield Park.

Belfast, York Street. — The Annual Report of this congregation just issued shows steady progress. During the past three years there have been no money raising efforts of any kind, and this year no appeals or mention of finances was made from the pulpit. The year has also been a difficult one, with many absences by the minister, which unfortunately always leads to a considerable loss in collections. Under the circumstances the report is excellent. Stipend reached a new high livel with £293, Collections £104. The balance in hand was maintained, and a small sum carried to reserve. The report makes special mention of the growth of the Fellowship on Sunday afternoon, when the Hall is full chiefly of men. As this meeting sometimes continues till six p.m. it has at times been difficult for members to attend again in the evening. This has reduced the pressure on our space at night. Some good members, including Captain and Mrs. Davison, have gone to live in England, but their places are filled by new workers. The congregation is being directed to a new Forward Movement during next year. Twenty new members have joined during the past two months. The scattering of the people to the outskirts of the city makes it necessary to have a larger membership to maintain the attendances. There has been little to report during the past two months. The visit of Father Ryan to the Fellowship will long be remembered. Though the meeting was not advertised, people were waiting to get into the Hall two hours before the time of commencing. Both Dr. Ryan and Dr. Agnew received an ovation on taking the platform. The speaker made reference to the great work done by Unitarians in days gone by for the emancipation of the Church to which he was proud to belong, and for liberal thought, and made several references to Dr. Henry Montgomery and Dr. Martineau. These were received with warm applause by an audience which only included a minority of our own people, who had been requested to stay away to leave room for visitors. We feel much good was done for our Faith. Dr. Ryan dealt with Fascism and Communism and his objection to both, and though many present held opposite views, all were deeply impressed by the way in which obvious scholarship was shown in the simplest words. Question time was a revelation. Those who quoted Marx and Lenin found that the speaker apparently was thoroughly at home with those writers, and a gentleman who professed to be a student of Shaw discovered writings by him of which he had not apparently heard. Alderman Midgley, M.P., who had just had a prolonged public controversy with the speaker, voiced the feelings of all when he said they had had a demonstration of the value of a training in debating methods which would be of the greatest value to them all. Dr. Agnew was warmly complimented on the way in which he conducted a meeting, about the wisdom of which some had expressed doubts. The subject was the most controversial which could have been chosen at a time when feelings ran high. Extreme Protestants and many Catholics were present, together with those who held the views which Dr. Ryan has always strongly opposed, but at critical moments a choice remark or an aside from the chair turned excitement into laughter. The feelings were expressed by many that a few more such meetings would do untold good in Belfast. Father Ryan remained for tea, and watched the assembling of the evening congregation. The meeting was a practical demonstration that our professions of toleration and broadmindedness can be carried out. It was a daring venture in one of the most troubled districts of the city. Since this meeting the attendance at our Fellowship have practically doubled. On January 29th we were to have entertained the Young People of the Denomination on the recommendation of the Temperance Committee. We looked forward eagerly to this meeting, and our ladies prepared to entertain all who might come. We were disappointed in that apart from ministers and their families and about a dozen of those loyal people who attend all denominational gatherings and our own people who had already heard the lecture, which was to have been the attraction many times, no one turned up. The weather was undoubtedly bad, but the lecture has been

given before and since in much worse weather to crowded audiences, who willingly paid to hear it. Given by one of their own ministers, and dealing with a subject in which Unitarians, as an inquiring people should be specially interested, we cannot understand that not even a dozen young people of our Churches endeavoured to be present. The weather did not prevent some of their ministers making long journeys, as well as a few older people. We do not know whether such meetings do any good to those who attend, and certainly few of them appeared to require any exhortation on Temperance, but we confess that they make it very difficult for us to get our workers to undertake such things again, and it becomes increasingly difficult to get any of our people to attend denominational gatherings anywhere. We have been criticised at times because we do not join in denominational activities, though our numbers at any gathering are usually as large as those from anywhere else, but it is difficult to get scores of people to develop enthusiasm for a new cause when they do not find any amongst its own adherents. We greatly appreciate the good friends who did attend in many cases under difficulties. We are now looking forward to the Dramatic Society's production of "Killybuck," from Tuesday to Friday of the first week in March. We would urge any country friends to come as early as possible. They will also have an opportunity of hearing the Russian Lecture on March 15th. This may be the last time that the Lecture will be given in York Street owing to the demand for it by outside organisations during the last two months of the season. G. H.

Greyabbey.—A Guest Tea was held on Thursday, 21st January, at 6 p.m. After tea, "The Tame Drudge" (by George Shiels) was presented by the Moneyrea Dramatic Society. Notwithstanding the inclement weather, there was a large attendance, and the proceedings were highly successful. Lord Justice Andrews presided. A hearty vote of thanks to the Chairman and players was proposed by Mr. Warnock and seconded by Mr. M'Avoy. The proceeds amounted to £57.

Ballyhemlin. — A Guest Tea will be held on March 19th, at 7.30 p.m. in the Orange Hall, Ballyhalbert, to defray cost of repairs to Heating Apparatus in the Meeting House.

Comber Branch of Women's League. —There have been several happy gatherings in the Schoolroom in connection with the Women's League. A delightful film entertainment was enjoyed by the members in December. In January the members of the First Church and Moneyrea met for a merry party. Members of the Comber Branch gave two Irish folk dances, which they have learned by the teaching of Miss Stock, a member of the Belfast Irish Folk Dance Society, and who gives her services to the League. Songs were sung by Mrs. Hugh Ferguson and Mrs. H. M'Cormick, the accompaniments being played by Mrs. R. Ferguson. In February the Malcolm Players from Stanhope Street gave of their best to an audience which filled the Schoolroom. Mr. Pett, the author and producer of the play, led his players through scenes grave and gay and dramatic. This is the third session of the Players, and they now acquit themselves in a very efficient manner. It is well-known that it is far harder to be funny on the stage than sad. Mr. and Mrs. Sherlock were very good, as was Miss Stewart, a newcomer in a far from easy part. The other parts were all straight parts, and were effectively portrayed. Mrs. Glynne Davies, President of Comber Branch, thanked Mr. Pett and his players for an evening of good entertainment. Mr. Pett responded, thanking the Comber people for their encouragement of the players. Tea was provided by the members of the League for the visitors. Mr. Eakin voiced their thanks and mentioned the help and sympathy he had from the Andrews family in his work at the Mission. Lord Justice Andrews replied to the message of thanks. Thanks to the great generosity of the Right Hon. J. M. Andrews, the audience listened in great comfort and warmth and benefited exceedingly gladly by the new heating apparatus in-

stalled in the Schoolroom. We wish the Malcolm Players great success in their new venture of "Happy Days."

First Church, Belfast.—In spite of the sickness prevalent in the congregation, as elsewhere, the attendance at the annual meeting was rather larger this year. After prayer the Chairman, in welcoming those present, alluded to the passing of several older members recently and to others of long connection, now very seriously ill. The report and balance sheet will be circulated in due course. It is worthy of note that the large overdraft has been wiped out by congregational effort, and all our buildings are now in a condition worthy of their sacred and secular functions.

Killinchy. — On Saturday, January 16th, 1937, the Rev. J. D. Davies and the Moneyrea Players entertained our people with a fine representation of Shields' comedy, "The Tame Drudge." We had a full audience in the Lecture Hall, and have to thank Rev. J. D. Davies for bringing his players. The comedy was very well represented, and the players, all of them, did remarkably well. We are grateful to them for what they did for us.

Antrim.—The annual meeting of the congregation was held on Friday evening, January 22nd, in the Old Presbyterian Meetinghouse. The ladies of the congregation had the room decorated, and a glorious fire, with a sumptuous tea; so at 7 o'clock we sat down together under bright and happy surroundings, the only disappointment being that some of our members had not sufficiently recovered from influenza to face the wild elements of that afternoon. After tea the minister gave a short address and welcomed the Forrest family, who during the year had come to Antrim from Belfast. The financial statement showed the congregation more satisfactory than for many years, with only 27/6 of a deficiency on the year. Miss Smith very kindly presented the congregation with heating radiators, which were greatly appreciated by all the worshippers. Following the statement of accounts, Miss Forrest showed a very interesting exhibition of museum curios, which was deeply appreciated by all those present, after which the happy gathering wended their way homeward shortly after 10 o'clock.

Ballycarry.—A very successful entertainment was held in the Badminton Hall, Ballycarry, under the auspices of the British Women's League (Ballycarry Branch), on the 19th January, 1937. The feature of the entertainment was the visit of the Rev. John Begg, of Larne, with his troupe of talented young people, known as the 'Meeting House Players," who presented a well-known and very attractive play entitled "Neighbours' Childer." A very interesting miscellaneous variety of items — song and dance—were also presented by local and visiting friends from Carrickfergus and Belfast. The large and handsome hall was comfortably filled by an enthusiastic audience. The whole of the arrangements was in the capable hands of Mrs. Willie Millar (hon. secretary of the British Women's League, Ballycarry), and Mrs. John M'Kee. Rev. W. G. Marsden was in the chair.

Women's League (Ulster District).—The quarterly meeting was held at Mountpottinger on Tuesday, January 26th. There was a service in the church at 3 o'clock, conducted by Mrs. Begg, of Larne, who preached a very helpful sermon. Miss Ashworth presided at the organ. There were about sixty members from branches in Antrim and Down. Tea was served in the Schoolroom, after which reports of the winter activities of many branches were given. Miss Armstrong, President of the Ulster District, read the New Year Message to members, from the President of the British League of Unitarian and other Christian Women.

Warrenpoint—The annual church social in connection with First Presbyterian (Non-Subscribing) Church was held in the Church on Tuesday evening. In spite of much illness in the congregation a goodly number were present. Tea was served early in the evening, followed by games, and then a most enjoyable concert. The various items were contributed by young and old and were wide

in range, from hymns sung by a junior choir to a song sung by the oldest member of the Church—Mr. R. Kerr. At an interval in the concert, Rev. John M'Cleery, B.A., S.T.M., minister-in-charge, on behalf of the Committee, handed to Miss Lockhart, the organist, a tangible token of their appreciation of her services throughout the year. After the concert more games were indulged in, and then came the showing of interesting lantern slides, including a picture of the late Rev. J. C. Pinkerton, a former minister of the Newry congregation, and the late Mr. Henry Quinn, founder of the Quinn Charity. Probably the first moving pictures ever seen in Warrenpoint and district were again on display after a lapse of 50 years or more. The distribution of prizes then followed, and a few more games brought a very enjoyable evening to a close with the singing of "Auld Lang Syne" and "God Save the King."—"Newry Telegraph."

SUNDAY SCHOOL COMMITTEE.

The following are the subjects for the Essay Competition for 1937:—

I.—"Temperance."
II.—"What Does Jesus Teach?"
III.—"Tell the Story of David in Your Own Words."
IV.—"What is the Value of Sunday?"
V.—"My Favourite Hymns—and why?"
VI.—"Why Are We Non-Subscribing Presbyterians?"

Essays are to be written on one side of paper only.

The name, age, and the Sunday School the competitor attends are to be written on front page, which must contain nothing else. Commence the Essay on the second page—front page to be detachable.

Essays of competitors over twelve years of age must be of not less than 500 words.

Essays are to reach me not later than Monday, 17th May, 1937.

Rev. J. Glynne Davies, the Manse, Comber.

Will our friends who see to the sale of this Magazine, kindly endeavour to get new subscribers.

OBITUARY.

Miss Jane M'Keekin, Ballycarry.

We regret to record the passing of Miss Jane M'Meekin, a member of one of our old families of the Ballycarry Church. All her forbears were members and constant attenders. For many years Miss Jane M'Meekin was a member of the choir, and also she taught in the Sunday School, until she was prevented from continuing by ill-health. She will be very much missed by the congregation, if only for the fact that her place in the Church was never vacant. Her passing is much regretted by her many friends.

This reminds us that our families are being rapidly depleted of its old and faithful members.

Miss Lydia Frazer M'Caw, Belfast.

Miss Lydia Frazer M'Caw, a daughter of the late Rev. Mr. M'Caw, of Killinchy, passed away at her residence in Belfast on January 31st, 1937, and was interred at Killinchy on February 3rd. The funeral was private, and the committal at the grave was taken by the Rev. R. N. Cross. Her sister, Miss Annie M'Caw, survives her, and she is still remembered as having charge of the Depository in Rosemary Street. Both ladies retained an active interest in the Meeting House at Killinchy, of which they were stipend payers.

Miss Margaret Roberts.

It is with great regret that we have to report the passing of Miss Roberts, who, all her long life of almost 90 years, was connected with Dunmurry congregation, the ministers of which were Rev. Dr. Montgomery and Rev. T. H. M. Scott. She was 21 when the former died, and 48 when the latter passed away. At her death she had been 41 years under the Ministry of the present minister, Rev. J. A. Kelly, who, at her funeral, declared that she was an ideal member, always helpful, encouraging and sympathetic. In this she set an example which, if followed in our congregations generally, would work wonders. She never married, but she acted a sa mother to many of the junior members of her

family. She will be greatly missed by them and by the minister and members of the congregation. Her death was an ideal one, having passed away in her sleep without a struggle—a beautiful end to an ideal and helpful life.

Miss Margaret Bailie, Killinchy.

We desire to record the death of Miss Margaret Bailie, of The Rocks, Killinchy, who on the 9th of February, died at the Ards District Hospital. Miss Bailie, for a number of years, had been almost blind and very infirm; yet all her life, her brother Thomas, now dead; her sister Mary Jane, gone before her, and a niece had always been assiduous worshippers at the New Meeting House, Killinchy. She belonged to a very old Killinchy family. Most of her family were buried in the plot of ground where her remains were laid to rest at 2.30 p.m. on Thursday, Feb. 11th, 1937. Much sympathy was extended to her brother, Mr. James Bailie, who is 90 years of age and more. A large gathering of neighbours assembled, together with a large number of her fellow-worshippers, who paid the last respects to an old resident who, during her active days, was a constant worshipper. The service was conducted in the home by her minister and the Rev. J. G. Davies. Her minister committed the remains to their last resting place, and the Rev. J. G. Davies led in prayer.

CONSTITUTION AND DISCIPLINE OF THE CHURCH.

Very few of us laymen are familiar with the laws of our Non-Subscribing Church Synod and its constituents, and the lack of knowledge is to be deplored. Only too often are ministers and laity at loggerheads as to proper control and procedure in church affairs. I must confess that until lately I held views on certain matters, based largely on my experience in American Churches. These Churches, however, are not Presbyterian like ours, and their alliances are not so strongly bound together as our Presbyteries or Synod. Indeed, the individualism of our American Churches is one of their weak points, as many struggling congregations found in the late depression there.

All our Church Committee men should read the Constitution of the Church. It is most interesting and helpful. If the Synod funds would allow, copies should be printed and distributed.

The Code gives Scriptural authority for almost every rule laid down, and is closely bound up with the old Scottish Confession of Faith—a far more liberal document than the better known Westminster Confession, which displaced it in 1647.

The Government of the Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church, like that of the Presbyterian Church, is exercised according to the Code, by Sessions, Presbyteries and the Synod. Sessions, in the course of years, have gradually merged into our General Committees. The jurisdiction of Sessions, as originally laid down in Sec. 2, Par. 7 of the Code, shows that they were responsible for the expenditure of monies, and directs that the accounts should be audited once a year and left open to the inspection of the congregation. In Paragraph 3 of the same section it states that the Minister is ex-officio Moderator of the Session, but in his absence the Session shall then appoint their own chairman.

As to the duties of the Committee, the Code states:—"As it is evidently injurious to religion that the Minister should take any part in the collection of money for his own support, it is the duty of Committee to let seats and collect stipend." All other monies which may be raised for the benefit of the congregation are placed under the joint management of the Committee and Session. Thus, logically, the Minister, as chairman of Sessions, must also preside over Committee.

Up to some sixty years ago, when our congregations had ministers brought up under Presbyterian customs, the majority of them closely conformed to the Code, but as fewer students entered from Ulster into the Ministry our Church was obliged to fill vacancies with ministers from England and Wales, who for various reasons allowed certain customs and privileges to lapse.

As to the jurisdiction of Presbyteries over congregations, "To the Presbytery belongs the superintendence of all mat-

ters connected with the order, prosperity and religious well-being of the several congregations under their care."

Presbyteries have the right to examine the records of Sessions or Committees to secure appeals against their sentences and to sustain, modify or reverse their decisions.

In Orthodox Presbyterian Churches regular visitations of congregations are made, and our Church Code provides for same. Unfortunately this is not carried out regularly. I say unfortunately, for I am of opinion that if it had been done some of our country churches would be better off financially, if not in strength of membership. The visiting Commissioners are bound to enquire into the finances of the congregation. Such queries as, "What is the state of the congregation as to its pecuniary affairs?"

What properties, if any, belong to the congregation? Can you mention the tenure of your properties? Can you exhibit or state the stipend accounts of the congregation? These and further enquiries would prevent unfortunate investments or any unwise expenditure, as one of the purposes of the visitation is to advise as circumstances may seem to require.—Yours, etc.,

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—:o:—

BELFAST CHAPTER

meets in the CENTRAL HALL, ROSEMARY STREET, at 8 p.m., Third Thursday of the month, October to May, inclusive.

OBJECTS (inter alia).

To encourage laymen to take a more active part in the work of the Churches.

To form a bond of union and closer co-operation between the members of the various congregations.

The Committee invite those who are not all ready members to join. The minimum subscription is 2/6, and further particulars may be obtained from—

MR. J. H. GILLILAND,
35 Rosemary St., Belfast, Hon. Sec.
MR. J. EDMONDSON, Jr., Asst. Hon, Sec
19 Lime Street, Belfast

CORRESPONDENCE.

IMPERIAL ETHIOPIAN LEGATION.

DEAR SIR,—Believing as I do, that the sympathies of the British public and the religious bodies are with ill-used Ethiopia, I beg to ask your congregation kindly to show their sympathy in a practical form by giving on one or two Sundays to a collection towards the Ethiopian Defence and Relief Fund which, with their earnest prayers, will be highly appreciated and most gratefully received on behalf of the afflicted and forsaken people of Ethiopia, and of our Church, which is in great danger of persecution and extermination for its faith and doctrine.

You will have learnt from the press that one of our bishops has already been murdered and that all our priests have been threatened.

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We request your prayers that by God's grace the Ethiopian Church may be sustained against religious persecution, and trust in your financial help to relieve the suffering forced upon us by an unjust war of aggression.—Yours truly,

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